

## Dear Fifth Grade Parents,

Today was spent moving desks and supplies into the fifth grade classroom--after a morning of meetings, of course. While I was looking at the students' small desks, I thought about how much fun it will be to work with a fifth grade class once again. During my Waldorf training, I was often told that the fifth grade is the golden age of childhood. What I experienced as a fifth grade teacher is that, yes, it is truly a magical time. This is the time in their young lives when they are on the cusp of losing their sense of innocence, still so much wanting to believe in the magic of the world, but, at the same time, developing the reasoning skills to understand that there is a curtain to peek behind. At this age, the children are at one with their bodies—strong, limber, and graceful; and soon adolescence will bring about that awkwardness they will feel. It is the golden age, and I am so happy and honored to be the class teacher for these children, your children. I have spoken to some of you and want to express my thankfulness for your, support, care, and thoughtfulness. The students have shown me an incredible amount of excitement about next year. I am thoroughly excited as well.

This evening I have been packing backpacks and duffel bags for my summer adventure in Alaska. I will be backpacking across Denali Park for several weeks. While packing, I have included some texts from the histories the students and I will be studying. I also have included the teacher's guide to Singapore Math and The Common Core Standards for fifth grade math. While I'll be taking the children through five epochs of human history this year (India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece), I also know that there is much to do in order to bring these students up to meet the state's math standards.

## Here are some things I need to ask of you:

I talked to Heidi, and she agreed to do the pizza lunch every other week—on Fridays. Cynthia has told me that she won't be able to share the responsibility with Heidi. We will need a parent to volunteer to take this up on the weeks that Heidi cannot. I've let Beni know that we won't be starting this until September. I'll be trying to settle this with the office and you all when I return in the middle of August.

I like to have the students active and moving. Please have your fifth grader come to school with sneakers, running shoes, or some kind of athletic shoe. Please also be sure that these shoes are <u>tied</u>. I will be doing a lot of running, jumping, skipping, hopping and many other things with the students. I will want them to participate and perform to the best of their ability and won't want to see anyone get hurt. If fashion is a very big issue, then at least be sure that your child has these shoes at school.

Please be sure that your child has a reusable water bottle each and every day. Sun hats are always a good idea.

I would like to have a parent meeting the very first week of school to discuss <u>so</u> many more things. Perhaps we can tentatively schedule this for August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30. I'll make a definite date when I return to town on August 15<sup>th</sup>.

For right now, this seems to be all I really need to communicate. Once again, though, I'm very excited to be working with this fine, fine class of students and you, who have raised them to be such good and kind children.

Although I'll be out in the backcountry for part of the summer and out of internet service for another part, please don't hesitate to contact me via email with any questions or thoughts you might have. I will answer when I can. My email address is <a href="mailto:jeffroid5@yahoo.com">jeffroid5@yahoo.com</a>. Have a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Holmes

## Things To Have For The Start Of Fifth Grade

- A Great Attitude
- An understanding of the word "cooperation"
- Tied sneakers
- A water bottle
- Excitement
- A 3 ring binder, with subject dividers

- A pencil sharpener that collects the pencil shavings
- A pair of scissors
- An idea of where India is on the globe
- A smile
- A hearty lunch